

ACVS
FIRST QUARTER
2021-22
Newsletter
October, 2021

The Another Choice VOICE



ACVS mission statement holds strong

All schools across Idaho have found themselves severely tested lately by external factors, and our Another Choice Virtual Charter School has also felt pressure. However, it's also been a chance to check the endurance of the business model we set up 12 years ago.

The impact of those external factors to ACVS activities was quite different here, where we've been fully invested in virtual learning since 2010, than in the traditional brick-and-mortar schools who found themselves struggling to decide whether on-line school was a viable alternative to their established curriculum.

Our school's challenges were different and unique, arising through our efforts to continue vital face-to-face learning activity for all our students.

Additionally, school administrator Dr. Laura Sandidge says it also can be tricky to fairly compare the impacts of those external factors on our school with other schools because of the special ACVS mission of opportunity for students to demonstrate growth in



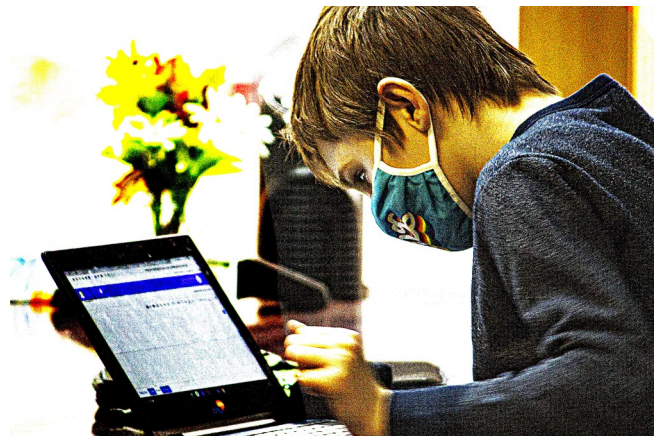
Sandidge

their academics. This holds true for students who are both above and below grade level academically. We want to see growth in our students and focus our measurement on that growth.

Another Choice is a public school that vows a standards-based education to any individual, both socially and intellectually, to anyone from independent overachievers to students with learning differences.

ACVS this semester has almost 40 percent of its student body whose needs don't conform to what would be expected in a regular brick-and-mortar classroom. Sandidge, a SpEd teacher herself, has nurtured a collaborative interplay between our SpEd teachers and the gen-ed faculty, and between departments, so students can gain a little extra in any given class and interrelate what they're learning in separate courses.

It's a healthy mix, she says: "Every one of us has areas where we excel and where we need to develop. Our school model gives students an amazing oppor-



During the past 12 years, Another Choice has positioned and prepared itself as a public school to accommodate any K through 12th grader, whether a fiercely independent learner who wants to complete school sooner than scheduled or one who needs steady face-to-face interactive growth for a higher quality of life.

tunity to show off their skills in one area while getting more support in an area that might not be as strong for them."

ACVS MISSION STATEMENT

Another Choice Virtual Charter School seeks to provide a safe, individualized standards-based education for Idaho's students, K through 12, with and without disabilities, to enable them to meet their full potential both intellectually and socially. Our focus is to offer an individualized education for all, specializing in individuals with learning differences, to become full and active contributing members of society through a virtual and experiential format.



Thomas Crow
Boise Lab



Adam Curry
Tutor/Nampa Lab

**Say Hi
To Our
Fresh
Crew**

*(we've got HR
now too!)*



CaraMia Dorrian
Elementary



Cherish Flint
Secondary



Andrew Marincic
SpEd



Whitney Oliver
Secondary



Lorissa Pooley
Elementary



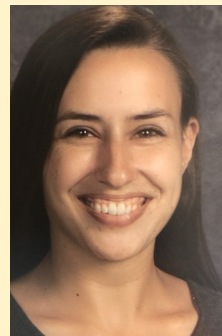
Christina Reyes
Staff



Laura Shoemaker
HR



Kassi Huwa
Elem. SpEd



Miranda Waterman
Collaboration

ANY OTHER CIVILIANS FOR SPACE TRAVEL?



The Vast and The Curious

By Easton Joyner
ACVS Class of 2022

I think it's cool that an all-civilian crew has gone to space. *Inspiration4*, a mission so named because of the four people on board, was completed just last month. Funded by American aerospace manufacturer SpaceX, two of the



Easton Joyner

four seats were either donated or raffled off to raise \$200 million for St. Jude's Children's Hospital. I like that we have gotten to the point where we can now send anybody to space, regardless of physical limitations. (Note the *Inspiration4* commander was an experienced pilot and all four travelers were flight trained.) I wonder if in the near future, we will be able to discover more about the universe and how life works. There are a lot of planets out there that we can eventually colonize, and I'd love to go to any planet I'd want to, if possible. I started to wonder whether other people would want to go to any other planet in space, if they could, so I did an informal survey.

I asked a few of our *Another Choice* teachers what they thought. Here's my

question: "If you had the money and you could do space travel, would you do it? Why or why not?"

Here's what they said: Mrs. Farley, my advisory teacher, is always ready with advice. Turns out, however, she isn't so keen about getting too far away from her own house.

"If I had the money, would I travel in space?" she repeated. "NO, I wouldn't, because I think it is very scary how big space is, how dangerous it could be, and I just don't think we're at a place technologically where I would feel safe doing it.

"I also have Type-1 diabetes," she said, "and I'm very reliant on having supplies that I need when I need it. I never really like going out to the boonies or anything ...

"I like to be around civilization."

Isn't civilization what space travelers are trying to get away from?



Josephson

I took the space travel question to my math and programming teacher, Mr. Josephson, who's clear he would love to go to space, albeit closer to home. "It's all about space travel right now," he said, "... about going to Mars, which is most likely a ONE-WAY TRIP.

"Being as I have a family, I'm not for a one-way trip to Mars — to stay, to set up camp and live out my days in a bubble.

"But a low-earth orbit? That would be so awesome, to experience weightlessness for



Farley

a couple of days. "That seems like such fun," he said. "I would absolutely go. Very cool!

"Why? I don't know, just ... experience." One more teacher at *Another Choice*, the maternal Mrs. Sanders, was not vague that space travel wouldn't be one of her priorities. But would she or wouldn't she?

"I would NOT do space travel," Mrs. Sanders explained thoughtfully, "because I'M SCARED. That's SCARY. The unknown is very scary, and since I don't know what's in space, I think I would use my money on other things, like my family.

"That's more important than space." Well, do we still need more data, or have we proven conclusively yet that one out of every three online teachers would jump at the chance to do space travel? Might we be able to conclude by now that all male teachers



Sanders

would go and all female teachers would stay home? Need a few more survey samples? Let me ask you: How many more civilian space missions do you think it will take before every Earthling is ready to get on board? And when will they open up a first-class section?

In conclusion, it doesn't seem many people would like going into space right away. Space is a vast thing, and the distances between objects is far, so it takes a while to get from one planet to another.

Even if people wanted to go to space, how many do you think would want to go farther than the Moon, and how many would want to come back?

So many questions, and so many surveys!

DEPRESSION? Sariah suggests 'R.E.D.' more!

(Editor's Note: ACVS freshman Sariah Collings is such a lively person, it's hard to reckon that the same young lady could be familiar with such soul-shaking bouts of depression as she describes here. Regardless, it's good to know Sariah has some sound strategies to share to withstand a serious mood disorder that affects millions of people.)

By Sariah Collings ACVS Class of 2025

Depression is like noticing others going swimming and having fun while the waves of a mighty ocean pull you underwater, further and further; you can't breathe and don't die, so you're in just a state of constant suffering. Sad feelings, even in the extreme, may be a part of depression but only a temporary portion of it. Depression, instead, is a persistent feeling of hopelessness, like a relentless scream 24 hours a day, seven days a week telling you you're garbage. Depression is misery, all alone, in a pitch-black closet, making you hate yourself because you exist.

Depression is such a complex subject, so different for so many people, from quite mild to so severe. The American Psychiatric Association says a diagnosis of depression requires symptoms that last at least two weeks.

Where grief might be an understandable emotional pain in direct response to a family tragedy and a hurt that makes you want to DIE, depression can be a persistent inexplicable feeling of worthlessness that tempts you to stop coping with the pain and END it all. It is common and serious.

Reasons for depression can be genetic, chemical, environmental, behavioral. Those with low self-esteem, those exposed regularly to neglect, abuse, poverty are more vulnerable.

Causes and effects of depression



Sariah Collings

R Remember
E Exercise
D Dress Up

will be conversation forever, but I do know three ways to square off against depression. Recall them as **R.E.D.**

REMEMBER. Let's begin with "R." My health teacher, Mrs. Friend, is in her seventh year here at Another Choice Charter.

She is certified as a counselor and a special ed teacher, and she is quick with helpful ideas: "Remember that you are not alone. Many people suffer from depression and there is help out there. Don't tune the world out. Find someone to talk to. Get your thoughts out. Don't suppress them," she said.

Find the good in yourself and others. Everyone has at least one thing that they like about themselves, even if it's just the fact that you don't have the flu. Focus on those

things: "At least I look good today." "At least I'm not failing Science!"

EXERCISE. Next, we have "E," for Exercise, and I can tell you, if you are depressed, this is going to be the last thing that

you want to do. But when you exercise, your body releases chemicals such as dopamine and endorphins that soothe pain and make you feel happy. Exercise also helps your brain get rid of chemicals that make you feel stressed and anxious.

DRESS UP. "D" is for Dress Up! Football star Deion Sanders, once said, "If you look good, you feel good, and if you feel good, you play good." Wash your hair, brush your teeth, don't dress baggy.

Pajamas are comfortable, and we online schoolers can stay in pajamas all day, but caring for your outer body fights depression. Tell yourself your beautiful because you are! Look into the mirror and think "Wow!"



Heidi Friend

THE BLUE HAND

By Eddie Chancellor
ACVS Class of 2023

Tom and Dan stood in the boys restroom passing the lighter back and forth between them.

Tom says, "You do it." Dan replies, "No you do it."

Tom takes the lighter and ignites a small flame, holding it in front of his eyes, and says, "Ok, I need more time to study for the math test anyway."

Dan nods his head and answers, "Alright, once you trip the fire alarm with the lighter, we need to get out of here as fast as we can, so we can join the other students exiting the building."

He and Tom had concocted this plan to get out of the math test, which was to be given during the last class of the day.

Once the fire department showed up and verified that it was a false alarm, school would be over for the day and they would have one more night to study.

Dan smiles and says, "Nothing can go wrong right?"

Tom agrees and holds the lighter up to the small fire sprinkler on the ceiling. The flame starts melting the wax which keeps the water from spraying out. Dan is at the bathroom door gripping the handle, ready to pull the door open and run. The next instant a loud alarm starts sounding and the water rushes out the sprinkler. Both boys run out the bathroom and look at each other. Tom lifts up the



hand which had held the lighter and it was bright blue. The sprinkler system had blue dye spray out before the water. Tom was wearing a black hooded sweatshirt so you really couldn't tell that he was wet, but his blue hand would tell everyone who had triggered the alarm.

Tom thrust the hand into his sweatshirt pocket and motioned Dan to follow him toward the students leaving their classrooms to evacuate the building. Once outside they stood with the other students from the math class and the teacher started to count their students to make sure everyone was accounted for. She was satisfied with the results and motioned for the principal to come over so she could report that **all her students were safe.**

"Nothing can go wrong right?"

The fire department came speeding up to the main doors and firefighters piled out of the long truck. They were dressed in full gear ready to tackle a fire. They stormed the school, and about 10 minutes later the alarm silenced. Soon afterward, a fireman exited the school; he walked with authority and was probably the fire chief. He approached the principal and talked with him. **The principal's shoulders dropped** and he looked disappointed. The principal cleared his throat and shouted, "Everyone hold up their hands please". Most of the students looked puzzled but Tom and Dan's eyes went wide. Tom reluctantly pulled his hand from the sweatshirt pocket and slowly raised it. Dan sadly looked at his friend and did the same. Tom felt that his hand was flashing like the fire truck lights announcing, "Look over here!" The principal eyes scanned the assembled students and stopped on Tom. "Tom Vann! In my office now!" the principal bellowed. Tom walked like a man going to his own execution. Dan tried to catch his friend's gaze but **Tom was staring at his feet** as he walked. The math teacher told her students to go get their stuff and head home. School was over.

Dan got home and entered his room and closed the door. He fell on his bed, fished his cell

phone out of his pocket and opened the texting program. He was hoping to see a new message from Tom. The last message was from this morning. He sent Tom a message asking how he was doing. Soon the screen told him that the text had been read but there was no reply. Dan stared at the screen for a few minutes and finally the new text sound played and words popped on the screen.

"I got suspended for the rest of the week. Don't worry, man, **I didn't mention you.**" Dan felt guilt in the pit of his stomach and typed, "Thx, Tom, but I feel really bad. I should be suspended too."

A new message responded, "Nah, it's good. My parents grounded me for 2 weeks. I can't go to the movies with you this weekend. I gotta go, my Mom is taking my phone."

Dan felt like punching something, so he walked to his desk and smashed his hand on the top. He had been painting models the night before and the **blue paint fell over and covered his hand.** He lifted his hand to his eyes in disbelief. Then a sense of calm came over him and he said to himself, "I'm going to visit the principal in the morning and tell him everything." A smile crossed his face as he left his room to go talk to his parents.

MR. WILLIAMS' 95 PERCENT SOLUTION

WHO'S THAT? Look at the picture of the guy here with that *knowing look* on his face. He has that look, right? Like he knows stuff? That's **Mr. Williams:** As *Information Technology coordinator* for our virtual school, Mr. Williams is involved somehow in *every bit of homework* passed between virtual students and their online teachers every day. So not only does Mr. Williams know if you're awake every semester, he also knows if you've been bad or good. So *be good*, for goodness sake.

SO WHAT? An IT guy who loves to help people!?! Ha. We found out Mr. Williams not only knows HOW to solve technical issues, such as computer problems, he also **LOVES TO HELP** people, even **BEFORE** they have computer problems. So, anyway, one day inside the IT office, Mr. Williams announces, "**You know, 95 percent of all computer problems for Another Choice students can be SOLVED if they update their Google Chromebook.**" (See that? The free tech tip!?! That's called *newsletter material*!!)

WHAT NOW THEN? Turns out updating your Chromebook makes for many happy hours of concentrated schoolwork. We never knew it, either, we admit, but we're ready to know more stuff now too! And just like you, we also keep wondering just how Mr. Williams can do it day after day after day, looking like he's taking a break maybe, but really thinking up brand new ways to help people. We like it, a lot.



Williams

Baby bundles new and due!

We've been excited this season with the extra-timely batch of blessed-event expectancies here with all the sitting-around waiting, and the way-past-the-due-date anticipating, and the calendar checking, and the back-and-forth pacing. We figure the parents-to-be have probably been feeling it too. Here's the latest activity report:

Miranda Waterman and husband Douglas welcomed son Walter, Sept. 4.

Taryn Cook, husband Kelsey and brother Teal welcomed son Tao Justo on Sept. 7.


Cara Mia and Kevin Dorrian welcomed daughter Kasey Carmela, who took her own sweet time until Tues., Oct. 19.

Amanda Popescu, husband Nicu and sister Anna are expecting their new baby girl in November.

Yessenia Lozano and husband Ivan are expecting their first baby boy Jan. 23.

Yearbook Photos

coming




Packages available!

Nov. 1st, 2nd, 3rd Nampa Lab!

Nov. 4th Boise Lab!

Be ready for signups!



the
ACVS

HALLO
-WEEN

PARTY!

Thursday, Oct. 28th
1:30 to 3 p.m.

Nampa Lab — Outside

Games, Crafts, Candy, Cookies and Cocoa

SEE YOU THERE!



I’m not allowed to tell ...but I can clue you in!

FORENSIC FICTION by Victoria Raulerson

EDITOR’S NOTE: In the English Department at ACVS, we come across clever attempts at literature all day long. The following story began as an assignment in Mrs. Lenz’ Forensic Science class and occurred at just the right time of year. It was written by ACVS Junior Tori Raulerson, who thinks she’s Edgar Allen Poe.

My name is Bella Wright. I love to ride my bike; I love the color green. I was born in 1898, and murdered in 1919. I bet that caught your attention.

Don’t worry, I’ll give you all the details I can, although I will warn you, the identity of my killer is still undetermined. And before you ask, I can not tell you who killed me, just a rule of the afterlife. I’m breaking one of the rules now by simply writing this for you.



Tori Raulerson

Around the time of my death, women were making strides in the US. They would now be allowed to vote, A female police officer was appointed for the first time, and World War One had finally ended, which meant women were reunited with their sons, husbands, and fathers. Although those soldiers returning created uneasiness within towns out of fear of aggression, most people were still extremely excited to see their loved ones.

Now as for me, I had been excited about all of these new things happening. I was ready to take a step toward the future and live a happy and wonderful life. That all changed when my body was found in the middle of the country lane.

The investigators traced my last known location to my uncle’s cottage. My uncle told them that I had been struggling with a loose wheel and that a strange and unnerving man had offered to ride with me to his cottage where I could fix my wheel. He told them that the unnerving man waited for me outside and when I was all fixed up and ready to go, the man and I continued our journey. He told them it was at 8:50-ish and I was expected to be home shortly after leaving his home.

I did not make it home on time, just to let you know. Well past the time I should have been preparing for bed, a farmer

found my deceased body at 9:20 in the middle of the country lane.

The police in the first few moments of the investigation believed I had simply fallen off my bike and hit my head. There was some promising, yet very minute evidence to prove that there was, in fact, a cold-blooded killer on their hands.

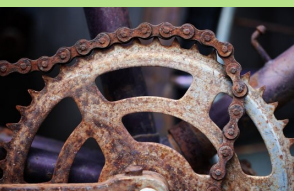
Exhibit one was a small amount of blood on a gate nearby. Exhibit two was a dead bird. And three was a bullet shell found by an investigator the day after the murder.

This bullet shell led to the discovery of a bullet wound on the left side of my head. Although I’m unsure why they needed a bullet shell to steer them to the hole in my head, the hole led to investigators classifying my death as a murder.

The police did more digging and found that it seemed as if I had been running from someone and had taken a narrower and faster route home than I usually would. They presumed the someone I was running from was the man who conveniently was there to help with my broken bike. It was believed that he took a faster route, cutting me off, and shot me point blank, fleeing the scene.

Once they had a solid idea of what had happened to me, they began their search for the criminal. They put out wanted posters all over for a man matching the description provided by my uncle’s and even posters asking if anyone had seen his distinctive bike.

The case went cold for seven months. No leads or information



were available anywhere. That was until a boat snagged its tow line on something in the water. Can you guess what that item was? I’ll give you a hint, it rhymes with rike. That’s right! They found the rusted bike of my killer. This piece of evidence led to more eyewitness testi-

mony. A man had seen a guy throwing his bike in the water, a guy who he described as almost identical to the man my uncle had described.

This bike also had more information to offer. The serial number was still intact after futile attempts by my assailant to scratch it off. 34-year old Ronald Light was arrested after they traced the bike to him. Ronald had a gun on him which was matched to the bullet that left a hole in my skull.